

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 01907 160341Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR
SUBJECT: LOCAL CHINESE PRESS COMMENTARY ON SINO-SOVIET BORDER
NEGOTIATION DEADLOCK

REF: A) MOSCOW 1947, B) PEKING 250, C) HONG KONG 1579

1. TWO COMMENTARIES IN HONG KONG'S PRC-CONTROLLED PRESS,
REACTING TO PRAVDA'S FEBRUARY 10 CRITICISM OF CHINA (REF A),
MAKE PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME SPECIFIC CHINESE POSITIONS
REGARDING THE CURRENT SINO-SOVIET BORDER NEGOTIATIONS. THE
FIRST, IN THE FEBRUARY 11 HSIN WAN PAO, RIDICULES SOVIET
EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, STATING THE KREMLIN KNOWS THAT
"CHINA ONLY WANTS THEM TO ADMIT THAT SOME TERRITORIES ON THE
SOVIET BORDER ARE CHINESE SOIL WHICH WERE FORCEABLY OCCUPIED
BY THE OLD TSAR, AND TO RECOGNIZE THESE HISTORICAL FACTS."
AS REF B NOTES, THE SOVIETS CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT OPENING UP
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BORDER QUESTIONS ON THEIR WESTERN FRONT. EVEN SUCH A SOVIET
ADMISSION WOULD NOT TOTALLY SATISFY THE CHINESE. THE COMMENTARY
GOES ON TO CITE CHINESE NEGOTIATOR AND VICE FOREIGN MINISTER
YU CHAN IN HIS RECENT TALK WITH THE EDITOR OF THE MAINCHI
SHIMBUN AS SAYING THAT "THE SOVIET UNION SHOULD APOLOGIZE TO
CHINA FOR THE MISTAKES IT HAS COMMITTED" AND "SHOULD ALTER
ITS POLICY OF SOCIAL IMPERIALISM" (REF C). THE COMMENTARY

ADDS THAT AN APOLOGY IS NOT ENOUGH; THAT THE SOVIETS SHOULD STOP THE "BAD THINGS" THEY HAVE BEEN DOING AGAINST CHINA "ALL THESE YEARS (NOT ONLY ALONG THE BORDER)" AND CORRECT THEIR MISTAKES.

2. THE SECOND COMMENTARY, IN WEN WEI PAO OF THE 13TH, VIEWS THE "OBSERVER" PRAVDA ARTICLE OF FEBRUARY 10 AS A STRIPPING OFF OF THE DETENTE MASK. THE "MASK" IS DEFINED AS THE VARIOUS SOVIET "GESTURES" SINCE MAO'S DEATH - THE CPSU CONDOLENCE MESSAGE, SUPERFICIAL CESSATION OF CRITICISM, DISPATCH OF ILICHEV TO PEKING, ETC. THESE "GESTURES" ARE SEEN AS MERELY SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO "DELUDE" AND "CHEAT" THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE HSIN WAN PAO AND WEN WEI PAO ARE NOT OFFICIAL PRC MEDIA ORGANS, THEY FREQUENTLY REFLECT OFFICIAL GUIDANCE GIVEN LOCAL CADRES ON MAJOR ISSUES. STATEMENTS SUCH AS "APOLOGIES ARE NOT ENOUGH" SEEM A CLEAR SIGNAL THAT THE CHINESE CONTINUE THEIR RIGID "PRINCIPLED" STAND ON THE BORDER TALKS WHICH GIVES THE SOVIETS LITTLE OR NO ROOM TO MANEUVER. THE PRAVDA ARTICLE AND THE LOCAL PRC COMMENTARIES SEEM TO INDICATE THAT BOTH SIDES ARE NOW PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH FAULT FINDING OVER THE CONTINUING DEADLOCK AND POSSIBLE COLLAPSE OF THIS ROUND OF THE TALKS.
CROSS

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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